

Message Text

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17

ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SP-02 L-01 EB-03 INR-05 EA-06

PA-01 PRS-01 RSC-01 DRC-01 /039 W

----- 033953

P R 180950Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO /SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5368

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COMUSJAPAN FUCHU JAPAN

AMCONSUL SAPPORO

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 13620

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR JA

SUBJ: GOJ REQUEST FOR CIVIL USE OF MISAWA AIRBASE (U)

REF: A. COMUSJAPAN 050447Z JUL 74

B. CINCPAC 020420Z OCT 74

C. CINCPACFLT 050422Z OCT 74

D. CINCPAC 120345Z OCT 74

SUMMARY: EMBASSY RECOMMENDS PROMPT APPROVAL OF GOJ REQUEST FOR CIVIL USE OF MISAWA. END SUMMARY.

1. OUR RESPONSE TO GOJ REQUEST FOR LIMITED CIVIL AIR USE OF MISAWA AB HAS BEEN PENDING SINCE JUNE 6. AT TIME OF REQUEST WE WERE DISCUSSING MOVEMENT OF P-3 DETACHMENT TO MISAWA BY JUNE 20. EMBASSY, ON INSTRUCTIONS, ASSURED GOJ WE WOULD GIVE THEIR REQUEST QTE PROMPT AND SERIOUS UNQTE CONSIDERATION. ALL COMMANDS CONCERNED HAVE NOW GIVEN PROBLEM EXHAUSTIVE STUDY. ALTHOUGH EMBASSY NOT FULLY INFORMED OF DETAILS, WE UNDERSTAND THAT APPROVAL HAS
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BEEN WITHHELD BECAUSE OF CONCERN THAT CIVIL AIR

OPERATIONS WILL INTERFERE WITH ESSENTIAL MILITARY OPERATIONS AND THAT IT WILL LEAD TO IRRESISTABLE PRESSURE FOR EXPANDED CIVIL USE OF MISAWA. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THESE CONCERNS ARE NOT JUSTIFIED IN VIEW OF LIMITED NATURE OF GOJ REQUEST AND THE SAFEGUARDS WHICH WILL BE BUILT INTO USG APPROVAL OF GOJ REQUEST. SPECIFICALLY:

A. REQUEST IS FOR ONLY THREE FLIGHTS PER DAY. WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY THESE CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED WITHOUT UNDUE INTERFERENCE TO ESSENTIAL OPERATIONS.

B. FONOFF HAS ASSURED US THAT THERE WILL BE NO INCREASES IN FREQUENCIES FOR NEXT FIVE YEARS. REQUEST FOR INCREASE IN ANY EVENT WOULD REQUIRE US APPROVAL IN JOINT COMMITTEE.

C. WE UNDERSTAND THAT GOJ LONG RANGE PLANS ENVISAGE IMPROVEMENTS IN OTHER TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES WHICH WILL REDUCE DEMAND FOR INCREASED CIVIL USE OF MISAWA.

D. USG APPROVAL OF GOJ REQUEST WOULD BE ON THE BASIS OF NON-INTERFERENCE TO MILITARY OPERATIONS AND WOULD BE SUBJECT TO OTHER CONDITIONS NECESSARY TO MINIMIZE THE IMPACT ON U.S. INTERESTS.

E. CIVIL USE WOULD ALSO ENHANCE BASE SUPPORT OPERATIONS.

2. FURTHER, IN EMBASSY'S VIEW FAILURE TO MEET GOJ REQUEST COULD CREATE POLITICAL SITUATION WHICH COULD PREJUDICE OUR CURRENT OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS---MOST PARTICULARLY ASSURED ACCESS TO RIPSAN RANGE AND SMOOTH IMPLEMENTATION OF JFAP (P-3 SQUADRON MOVE TO MISAWA). IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH GOJ WE HAVE STRONGLY RESISTED ANY SUGGESTION OF A QUID PRO QUO ON MISAWA. WE NEVERTHELESS CANNOT IGNORE POLITICAL REALITIES OF SITUATION. GOJ REQUEST REFLECTS REAL REGIONAL REQUIREMENTS AS SEEN BOTH BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND CONSERVATIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO HAVE BEEN MAINSTAY OF LOCAL SUPPORT FOR OUR BASE PRESENCE. SO FAR, GOJ HAS PLAYED CONSTRUCTIVE, CONFIDENTIAL

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HELPFUL ROLE IN PASSING LEGISLATION DESIGNED TO PROVIDE MEANS TO DAMPEN LOCAL PRESSURES OCCASIONED BY RECENT SHARP EXPANSION IN OUR USE OF MISAWA AND RIPSAN RANGE BY NOISY, HIGH-PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT. APPROVAL OF GOJ REQUEST WILL HELP FURTHER OFFSET RESENTMENT AGAINST THIS INCREASED USE AND ARRIVAL OF P-3'S.

3. REJECTION OF GOJ REQUEST WILL BE READ AS INDIFFERENCE

TO RECOGNIZED LOCAL NEEDS AND WILL REINFORCE VIEW HERETOFORE
SHARED BY SOME LOCAL GROUPS THAT ONLY SOLUTION POSSIBLE
IS REMOVAL OF US PRESENCE FROM MISAWA. WE WILL HAVE TO BE
PREPARED FOR SHARPLY MOUNTING SERIES OF LOCAL POLITICAL
DIFFICULTIES AND INCREASED OBSTACLES TO OUR USE OF THIS
IMPORTANT FACILITY. REJECTION WILL MAKE IT MUCH MORE
DIFFICULT FOR GOJ TO COUNTER THESE LOCAL PRESSURES.

4. EMBASSY THEREFORE RECOMMENDS PROMPT APPROVAL OF GOJ
REQUEST.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT, MILITARY BASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: shawdg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TOKYO13620
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740297-0056
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741033/aaaabceu.tel
Line Count: 126
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: A. COMUSJAPAN 050447Z JUL 74
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 JUL 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <19 MAR 2003 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOJ REQUEST FOR CIVIL USE OF MISAWA AIRBASE (U)
TAGS: MARR, JA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005